

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SOME ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

THE LAND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW and THE HOME of WASHINGTON IRVING. Illustrated. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1887.

THE MODERN SCHOOL OF ART. Illustrated. Pp. 22. New York, Cassell & Co.

MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME. By STEPHEN C. FOSTER. Illustrated by Mary Hallock Foote and Charles Copeland. Boston, Ticknor & Co., 1888.

THE SWANEE RIVER. By STEPHEN C. FOSTER. Illustrated by Charles Copeland. Ticknor & Co., Boston, 1888.

Nearly seventy years have passed since the first publication of the "Sketchbook," and half that time since Henry T. Ulcken met the home life of the author and the scenes at Sunnyside. In the volume before us the publishing firm so closely associated with Washington Irving in his lifetime confidently appeal to the third generation which has cherished not only admiration for the writer but also an affectionate interest in a beautiful personality. The persistence of this interest in Irving's home and haunts is as gratifying as the perfect preservation of that home as the perfect preservation of the "Sketchbook," and half that time since Henry T. Ulcken met the home life of the author and the scenes at Sunnyside. In the volume before us the publishing firm so closely associated with Washington Irving in his lifetime confidently appeal to the third generation which has cherished not only admiration for the writer but also an affectionate interest in a beautiful personality. The persistence of this interest in Irving's home and haunts is as gratifying as the perfect preservation of that home as the perfect preservation of the "Sketchbook."

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Nearly half a century ago there is not even a tablet to mark its site. But Sunnyside remains to us as often visited shrine—"The Land of Sleepy Hollow" is an appropriate offering. The text insides the classic legend of Ichabod Crane's disappearance by the Headless Horseman and the tale of Woister's Rest, together with some pleasantly written passages, historical, descriptive, and personal, by Mr. J. L. Williams, which are accompanied by a series of photographs and some of the outline drawings of the veteran illustrator, F. O. C. Darley. The photogravures, which reproduce recent photographs, represent scenes at Tarrytown associated with Irving's life and tales as they are at present, and the actuality of these illustrations in a way defounds the reader. Few of us would care to exchange our concession of the "Goblin's Bridge" for the actual trim, unromantic stone arch, or to accept a well-kept road bordered by neat fences in place of the "lonely rambling lane" which led to Woister's Rest. There is an evident incongruity between Irving's description of Katrina Van Tassel's home and the mansion estate with so many modern changes shown us with the remorseless accuracy of the cabinet. But, even though the "wild brook" becomes tamed under the yoke of a bridge and travel, and a painted picket fence in the scene of Andie's capture work with the imagination, this is the fault of time, and the camera has simply reproduced the results which time has brought about. Any one who prefers to create these scenes for himself from Irving's text rather than to view them as they are has perfect liberty of choice.

The photogravure process has been reasonably and some time remarkably successful. As might be expected, details are usually faithfully given, sometimes with an annoying literalism, as in the foreground of the view of Sleepy Hollow, and there are views like that of the old Dutch farm-houses which are quite wonderful in their precision. The extremes of black and white, the absence of gradations, and especially the aggravated intensity of the highlights, are the most unsatisfactory features of the plates. Since these photogravures are understood to be printed from copper plates which can be retouched, it would seem that either in this way or in the printing such violent high lights as are on page 62 and such painful reflections as are shown in the view of Irving's study might be to some extent modified. But with the general exception of the "glass and gutter" preserved from the original negatives these photogravures have many claims to pictorial interest, and they are, of course, valuable as records of undoubted accuracy, the chief end in this case, and therefore justifying the employment of photogravure. The text is printed from type on heavy paper with wide margins and three small photogravures, including a portrait of Irving, are inserted in the cover. The "letter press edition" is limited to 600 copies. It is gratifying to recognize the persistence of the affectionate regard which justifies a general tribute to Washington Irving's memory.

It would be interesting to know what "the modern school of art" really is, but the compilation of magazine papers published under this title by Messrs. Cassell & Co. affords us no enlightenment. In fact, without reference to its already monotonous appearance in connection with this volume, the phrase illustrates a lassitude in the use of language which is unfortunately prevalent in discussions of art. The term "school" as applied to the immediate following of a master in an academy is readily understood. The phrase, "a national school," has been significant in the past, but now that all Nations act and react upon each other so freely, art, as every one sees, is becoming cosmopolitan. There remains the use of "school" as descriptive of a mental attitude toward art, but there is surely no universal cult to-day, and although there are strongly marked tendencies, they are accompanied by decided reactions. It may be that the drift in pictorial art is toward naturalism and even toward realism, but a characterization of modern painting as universally naturalistic would be obviously idle. Love of sounding phrases is a stumbling block to the understanding. Even within the limited range of the volume before us we find such extremes as the severely academic art of Leighton and Payne, and the homely genre painting of Nicol, while several of the men claimed as English artists are of foreign birth and training. If we were to take seriously the editor's selections from *The Magazine of Art*, we must infer that the proportion maintained here—fifteen English artists to two Frenchmen and one American—represents his rating of modern art. If Messrs. Eastman, Johnson, Bouatt and Meissner had been omitted, and their places supplied by Watts, Alma-Tadema and another, this volume would have had a distinctive character as helping to illustrate the English art of the day, for Legras, Broughton and Herkomer may as well be classed as Englishmen.

The compilation, although "availability" has plainly been placed first in its formation, contains a considerable amount of interesting miscellaneous information concerning some artists like Millet, Hoinen, Hunt, Nicol, Herkomer, Broughton, Legras and Orcharton whose work has been introduced to the public to say nothing of others unfamiliar to our gallery hauntings. These articles, which are written in the usual vein of gently expressed eulogy, often include descriptions of the artist's homes as well as of their work, and perhaps these personalities will be better appreciated than acuter criticism. The numerous illustrations, which are also reproduced from *The Magazine of Art*, show signs of wear and tear but they will pass with a popular audience.

Mr. Foster's familiar songs, "My Old Kentucky Home" and "Swanee River," appear in small quarto volumes which are noticeable for excellence of paper and printing rather than for the merit of the illustrations. Neither Mr. Cowland nor Miss Foote, who contributes, we believe, only one illustration, seems quite at ease with "the negro in art," and yet other of our artists have shown us that the negro can be made sincerely pathetic and simply dignified as well as humorous. Mr. Copeland is hardly fortunate in the conception or technical rendering of either lighter or graver sentiment, but he has furnished some pleasant bits of landscape and a few drawings which have a true local color and are in the best sense illustrative.

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